

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

RECREATION LAND GRADING AND SHAPING

(Ac.)

CODE 566

DEFINITION

Reshaping the surface of the land to support recreation land use.

PURPOSE

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to support one or more of the following purposes:

- Establish or improve effective use of the land area for recreation
- Minimize on-site and off-site damage to resources from recreation land use

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On land areas where surface irregularities, slopes, obstructions, types of soils, or surface drainage interfere with planned recreational use, or where such use requires designed land surfaces.

CRITERIA

All planned work shall comply with federal, state, local, and tribal laws, rules, and regulations.

The grading or shaping shall be conducive to the overall recreation area and aesthetically blend with the general landscape and surroundings.

The grading or shaping shall be configured to minimize adverse on-site and off-site impacts such as accelerated erosion, riparian zone degradation, stream channel and streambank damage, hydrology modification, other water resource damage, aesthetics, or unacceptable damage to wildlife habitat, fragmentation, or restrict wildlife movement.

Grading and Shaping. If only shaping is required the cuts and fills may be estimated by observation or by a minimum amount of surveying. If grading to uniform surfaces is required, the design shall be based on a complete topographic or grid survey. Grading and shaping for specific uses, such as athletic fields, shall be according to the requirements of the intended use.

Cuts and fills shall be balanced to the greatest extent possible.

Soil compaction and displacement shall be kept to a minimum.

Where feasible and appropriate, soil material suited for plant growth should be salvaged, stockpiled, and protected for use as final cover material.

Surface Drainage. Plans shall include measures for removing or otherwise providing for control of excess surface and subsurface water.

Erosion Control. Plans shall include provisions for control of erosion. Disturbed areas shall be established to vegetation as soon as practicable after construction. If soil or climatic conditions preclude the use of vegetation and protection is needed, non-vegetative means, such as mulches or gravel, may be used. Seedbed preparation, seeding, fertilizing, and mulching shall be according to Critical Area Planting (342). Use vegetation adapted to the site that will accomplish the desired purpose. Preference shall be given to native plant species. If native plant materials are not adaptable or proven effective for the planned use, then non-native species may be used.

CONSIDERATIONS

Consider the effects of increased recreation and activities on the quality of both surface and ground water quality.

Consider planning safety features according to the use of the area. Safety features should be incorporated as required to control erosion and handle increased runoff.

Consider maintaining or improving habitat for fish and wildlife where applicable.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications for recreation land grading and shaping shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.

The following list of Construction Specifications is intended as a guide to selecting the appropriate specifications for each project. The list includes most, but may not contain all, of the specifications that are needed for a specific project:

- IA-1 Site Preparation
- IA-5 Pollution Control
- IA-6 Seeding and Mulching for Protective Cover
- IA-21 Excavation
- IA-23 Earthfill
- IA-26 Topsoiling

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

An operation and maintenance (O&M) plan shall be developed and implemented for the life of the practice.

The plan shall specify that the treated areas and associated practices are inspected annually and after significant storm events to identify repair and maintenance needs.